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UNCLAS HARARE 001732

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/PDPA FOR DALTON, MITCHELL AND SIMS  
NSC FOR JENDAYI FRAZER  
LONDON FOR GURNEY  
PARIS FOR NEARY  
NAIROBI FOR PFLAUMER

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION PAPER REBUTS "HERALD" STORY; HARARE

11. The August 29 edition of the independent weekly the "Zimbabwe Independent" carried an article rebutting a front-page article in the August 28 edition of the government-controlled daily "The Herald" that deliberately mis-reported and quoted out of context a most recent United States Institute of Peace report on the political situation in Zimbabwe. Under headline "U. S. Institute urges sustained pressure" the newspaper carried the following article by Dumisani Muleya on page 2:
12. "A negotiated political settlement between ZANU PF and the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) offers Zimbabwe the most credible chance for a resolution of the current crisis, U. S. research institute has said. But it urged the international community to maintain pressure on Harare. . .It said the balance of political forces at the moment made the environment for crisis talks ideal. Although ZANU PF is still in control through the use of force, it is not able to rescue the country from the crisis on its own. As for the MDC, it has widespread support of the people but has no capacity to impose itself on power. . .The report noted that President Robert Mugabe was a hindrance to change. `There is a growing consensus that Mugabe is the stumbling block to constructive dialogue, although increased calls for his resignation may have the unintended effect of strengthening his resolve to stay in power,' it said. . . ."

SULLIVAN